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Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Implementation of article VI

Report submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with action 20 of the action plan on nuclear disarmament, adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Accordingly, it contains the list of measures taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran, since the adoption of that action plan, to implement article VI of the Treaty, paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on the principles and objectives for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the action plan on nuclear disarmament adopted at the 2010 Review Conference, taking into account the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that reporting, as envisaged in actions 5 and 20 of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, is a useful means to assess the status of implementation of obligations assumed under article VI of the Treaty and the unequivocal undertakings committed by the nuclear-weapon States in the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Treaty. At the same time, while the objectivity of such an assessment can, in fact, be best served through the adoption of a unified format that properly defines the categories of required information, this mechanism cannot and shall not substitute for the fulfilment of the obligation for nuclear disarmament under article VI of the Treaty.

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran signed and ratified the Treaty in 1969 and 1970, respectively. In accordance with article III (1) of the Treaty, the Islamic Republic of Iran also concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in June 1973. The ratification of the Treaty before its entry into force and the early conclusion of the safeguards agreement with the Agency by the Islamic Republic of Iran clearly demonstrate its long-standing support for and commitment to the objectives of this instrument.

4. In 1974, the Islamic Republic of Iran presented the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Since then, the proposal has been endorsed annually by the General Assembly in resolutions that have been adopted without a vote since 1982. The Islamic Republic of Iran also signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996.

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5. The Islamic Republic of Iran has fulfilled its obligations under all the provisions of the Treaty with the aim of helping its integrity and universality and achieving its fundamental objectives. The policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to renounce the nuclear option as a matter of principle and to place its peaceful nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards of IAEA is a clear manifestation of its commitment to the Treaty. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the acquisition, development and use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to be inhuman, immoral, illegal and against its very basic principles. Accordingly, nuclear weapons have no place in the defence doctrine of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

6. The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI of the Treaty, the fulfilment of which is one of the fundamental objectives of this instrument, which can also greatly contribute to enhancing international peace and security. It is deeply disappointing, however, that the nuclear disarmament obligations under the Treaty, as well as the unequivocal undertakings committed by the nuclear-weapon States in the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, have remained unfulfilled.

7. As the International Court of Justice stipulated in its advisory opinion of 8 July 1996 on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law, and there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. While emphasizing the importance and validity of this advisory opinion with regard to the obligations of States parties under article VI of the Treaty, the Islamic Republic of Iran calls upon the nuclear-weapon States that have the primary responsibility in this regard to implement their long overdue obligations on nuclear disarmament. The full compliance by the nuclear-weapon States with their nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments is essential for progress in nuclear disarmament.

8. As a party to the Treaty, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues its compliance with the Treaty, including obligations under its article VI. The measures that have been taken, since 2010, by the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement article VI of the Treaty, paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the 2010 action plan on nuclear disarmament, taking into account the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996, are, among others, as follows:

(a) During the period, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to actively participate in international efforts to promote nuclear disarmament. Initiatives taken towards this noble goal have always enjoyed the full support of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this regard, in 2011 and 2013, the Islamic Republic of Iran presented two draft resolutions to the General Assembly on the follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which were adopted as resolutions 66/28, 68/35 and 70/38. By virtue of those resolutions, the Assembly, inter alia, called for all the nuclear-weapon States to take the following practical steps, which would lead to nuclear disarmament:

(i) Further efforts to be made by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally;

(ii) Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to article VI of the Treaty and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress in nuclear disarmament;

(iii) The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process;

(iv) Concrete agreed measures to reduce further the operational status of nuclear weapons systems;

(v) A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies so as to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination;

(vi) The engagement, as soon as appropriate, of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons;

(b) In 2012, the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with the other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, was one of the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 67/39 on the high-level meeting of the Assembly on nuclear disarmament, by which the Assembly decided, inter alia, to convene a high-level meeting of the Assembly on nuclear disarmament, on 26 September 2013, to contribute to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament;

(c) In pursuance of its long-standing principled position in support of nuclear disarmament, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, participated in the first-ever high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, on 26 September 2013, and presented, on behalf of the 120 States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, a three-point proposal on nuclear disarmament. The proposal was supported by many of the representatives of political and geographical groups, Member States and civil society participating in that meeting and was subsequently adopted by the Assembly in its resolutions 68/32, 69/58, 70/34 and 71/71 on the follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the Assembly on nuclear disarmament. Through those resolutions, the Assembly:

(i) Called for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction;

(ii) Decided to convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made in that regard;

(iii) Declared 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons devoted to furthering that objective, including through enhancing public awareness and education about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world;

(d) In order to promote the cause of nuclear disarmament, the Islamic Republic of Iran held two international conferences on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which were held in Tehran on 17 and 18 April 2010 and on 12 and 13 June 2011, at which the current challenges to the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments were examined and mechanisms to realize the lofty goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world were sought;

(e) During the period, and along with the other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to vote in favour of General Assembly resolutions on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons;

(f) The Islamic Republic of Iran was among the initiators and cosponsors of the idea of promoting the humanitarian aspects of nuclear weapons and, on the basis of its principled position on the renunciation of nuclear weapons, especially taking into account the religious prohibition of these inhumane weapons, actively participated in the three Conferences on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo in 2013, in Nayarit, Mexico, in February 2014, and in Vienna in December 2014;

(g) During the period, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to actively participate in annual substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission and fully supported its agenda item on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;

(h) Likewise, during the period, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to actively participate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that the Conference, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, should uphold its credibility and maintain its relevancy to international peace and security despite its current difficulties. To that end, during its presidency of the Conference in 2013, the main focus of the Islamic Republic of Iran was to reach an agreement on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. To that end, the Islamic Republic of Iran undertook its utmost efforts to consult almost all the members of the Conference. Accordingly, the common denominator of all positions was reflected in document CD/1952 as a proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the programme of work of that year of the Conference;

(i) Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran has contributed to the work of Conference on Disarmament, in particular its agenda item on nuclear disarmament, including through its active participation in preparing and submitting the working paper of the Group of 21 on nuclear disarmament in 2010 and subsequent years;

(j) During the period, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to fully support all international and regional efforts towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Likewise, the Islamic Republic of Iran maintained its principled position to vote in favour of all resolutions on the establishment of such a zone, including in the General Assembly, the General Conference of IAEA and the summits and ministerial conferences of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. In this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran, including through several rounds of consultations with the Facilitator, participated in the preparation process for the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as decided by the 2010 Review Conference and, in 2012, officially declared its decision to participate therein, which, regrettably, was not convened owing only to the refusal of the Israeli regime to participate in that Conference;

(k) The Islamic Republic of Iran also actively participated in the 2015 Review Conference and the meetings of its Preparatory Committee in 2012, 2013 and 2014, and submitted four reports on the implementation of article VI of the Treaty, paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the action plan on nuclear disarmament adopted at the 2010 Review Conference. The Islamic Republic of Iran also submitted four working papers on nuclear disarmament to those meetings;

(l) The Islamic Republic of Iran also actively participated in the meetings of the open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons in 2013 and 2016. In addition to making several proposals

during the meetings of the working groups, the Islamic Republic of Iran submitted two working papers on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations;

(m) The Islamic Republic of Iran participated and made statements at all meetings of the General Assembly, convened in 2014, 2015 and 2016, on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons;

(n) During the period, the Islamic Republic of Iran conducted several rounds of bilateral dialogue, on promoting the implementation of treaties banning weapons of mass destruction, with some nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, in which particular importance was attached to nuclear disarmament and the need for intensive international efforts towards the early realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world.